

# WILD

Mike Bartlett

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WILD



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*Wild* was first performed at Hampstead Theatre, London, on 11 June 2016, with the following cast:

WOMAN	Caoilfhionn Dunne
ANDREW	Jack Farthing
MAN	John Mackay
<i>Director</i>	James Macdonald
<i>Designer</i>	Miriam Buether
<i>Lighting</i>	Peter Mumford
<i>Sound</i>	Christopher Shutt

*For Joseph*

## **Characters**

ANDREW

WOMAN

MAN

*( / ) means the next speech begins at that point.*

*( – ) means the next line interrupts.*

*(...) at the end of a speech means it trails off. On its own it indicates a pressure, expectation or desire to speak.*

*A line with no full stop at the end indicates that the next speech follows on immediately.*

*A speech with no written dialogue indicates a character deliberately remaining silent.*

*This ebook was created before the end of rehearsals and so may differ slightly from the play as performed.*

1.

*A nondescript hotel room.*

*ANDREW is in the room.*

*A WOMAN has entered the room thirty seconds ago.*

ANDREW      Miss Prism?

WOMAN      That's right.

ANDREW      Is that a joke?

WOMAN      What?

ANDREW      Your name?

WOMAN      No.

ANDREW      Like a reference.

WOMAN      No.

ANDREW      A reference to –

WOMAN      It's not a reference.

It's a coincidental pun.

Which I thought you'd appreciate actually. And let me tell you, now you're in the club, that it's important to keep a sense of humour, because things are going to get, now and for the rest of your life, extremely difficult.

ANDREW      Well that's made me feel just rosy.

WOMAN      You want to know where it came from, the name?

ANDREW      Isn't it obvious?

WOMAN No.

ANDREW I'm fine.

*Beat.*

WOMAN You don't want to play. Okay. Do you want a drink?

ANDREW No thank you.

WOMAN I've got a sense, a feeling, I just know you want a gin and tonic? Something like that.

ANDREW You're wrong.

*Beat.*

WOMAN I'd like one.

ANDREW Okay.

*Beat.*

WOMAN I'm uneasy if it's just me. Not a party on my own, is it? If I have one will you have one?

ANDREW I need to keep a clear head.

WOMAN Why? Nothing's going to happen.

ANDREW Well.

WOMAN Nothing important's going to happen overnight, we're just going to talk and then tomorrow's another day.

ANDREW Okay so we're going to talk, right, so I need to keep a clear head. Is he calling on the phone?

WOMAN Who? Oh. You think he's going to call you on the phone?

ANDREW They said he'd get in contact and he's hardly likely to turn up in person.

WOMAN Why not?



ANDREW      He's trapped in an embassy in the middle of London.

WOMAN      Officially. Trapped is perhaps overstating it, the thing is we've got to make sure no one knows exactly where he is, so if he was coming to see you I wouldn't be able to tell you in advance, if you take my meaning.

ANDREW      So you're saying... what... he might come here? Tonight?

WOMAN      Look, you'll appreciate this when it's you – we couldn't have got you here without this kind of thing – the point is that *if* he's here, he's here, or if he's not here he's somewhere else. There are a lot of people who – let's not put too fine a point on it – want him dead, who are really out to kill him, and that's the club that you are part of now. You are Trotsky in Mexico, you are John Lennon in New York, Kennedy in fucking Texas.

ANDREW      Dallas.

WOMAN      I beg your pardon?

ANDREW      Kennedy got shot in Dallas.

WOMAN      Yeah, and Dallas is in Texas.

ANDREW      Yeah, I know, but...

WOMAN      Jesus this is your country.

ANDREW      I know – it doesn't matter.

WOMAN      We are very careful about saying where he is, and so long as you work with us, rest assured we're going to be equally careful about disclosing your location. I promise.

ANDREW      Good.

*Pause.*

WOMAN      How are you doing?

ANDREW      Okay.

WOMAN        This is weird for you.

ANDREW       Yeah.

WOMAN        All this.

ANDREW       Weird yeah.

WOMAN        Like it happened just... overnight.

ANDREW       Well it did. Pretty much.

*Beat.*

WOMAN        You must have predicted it though, you must have known.

ANDREW       Yeah for a long time

But it's different, sat there at your desk, trying to work through all the consequences, just in your small life, trying to work out that the moment you click that button, you are going to have to walk out and your entire existence will change for ever, you know that's a difficult thing to imagine, I don't have that kind of imagination, I don't think anyone does. Last week, okay *last week*, last Thursday I wasn't in Russia, I wasn't being chased, I wasn't at risk of being assassinated, I was having chicken with my girlfriend in KFC, you understand what I'm talking about? –

WOMAN        Yeah.

ANDREW       – I was that guy, with his girl, we had plans, we were just doing our thing, our apartment, our post, our freaking parents and now... you know what I'm saying?

WOMAN        That's shocking.

ANDREW       Right.

WOMAN        You took your girlfriend to KFC?

ANDREW       You're really funny.

WOMAN        And she's still with you?

ANDREW       Well no she isn't. She's back home.

WOMAN        I mean she didn't break up with you? That's not what prompted all of this?

ANDREW        No.

WOMAN        So what the fuck were you doing in KFC?

ANDREW        That's not the point I was making.

WOMAN        I *know*. It's humour. See? I defused you. That's what I did, you were blowing up, I took a metaphorical pin, and I burst you. Like ppfff. And you just went ffffffff.

ANDREW        You're a strange person.

WOMAN        Yes.

ANDREW        What's your – I don't even know who you are.

WOMAN        No.

ANDREW        What's your name?

WOMAN        I told you. Miss Prism.

ANDREW        Your real name not your James Bond name.

WOMAN        That is my real name.

ANDREW        No it isn't.

WOMAN        My full, real, name.

ANDREW        Your full name so your first name is Miss?

WOMAN        My first name is George.

ANDREW

WOMAN        George was the name of the first actor to play the part of Miss Prism in *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

ANDREW I think you're gone completely crazy now.

WOMAN A Trivial Comedy for Serious People. George was also a woman's name then, the part was played by a woman. I said actor because actress is politically incorrect. Anyway, I liked the name George Prism, so you can call me George, or Miss Prism, depending on your mood.

ANDREW You liked the name George Prism.

WOMAN Yes.

ANDREW You chose it.

WOMAN Had a certain charm.

ANDREW So it's not your real name like you said it was.

*Beat.*

WOMAN I'm not very good at this.

ANDREW You know I betrayed my entire country in an act that means I could be electrocuted and killed by my own politicians, I then flew to Hong Kong where I recorded an interview which was broadcast around the world, spent two days hiding in a pod-style hotel in Moscow Airport, before being smuggled onto a plane as luggage then back off the plane, and eventually across the Russian border, but despite all that circus or strangeness, I'd say this, you, this moment now, is head and shoulders the weirdest part of it. You are a fucking nutfuck.

*Pause.*

Isn't there anyone else to talk to?

WOMAN You speak Russian?

ANDREW No.

WOMAN You should learn.

ANDREW      Let's wait and see if I need to.

WOMAN      Well while you're waiting... I'm the only person to talk to.

ANDREW      Shit.

WOMAN      Yeah.

*Beat.*

                 Nightmare stuck in the room with the nutjob nutfuck. You  
                 sure you don't want a drink? Do you miss her?

ANDREW      What?

WOMAN      Your girlfriend. What's her name again?

ANDREW      I didn't tell you.

WOMAN      Oh. Yes. Sorry. What's her name?

ANDREW      Cindy.

WOMAN      No come on her real name.

ANDREW      What?

WOMAN      Oh, you mean... you mean it really is? Wow.

ANDREW      What?

WOMAN      Well. You're, like, American? And your girlfriend is like,  
                 called Cindy? Isn't that, like, oh my god? Like... weirdass?

ANDREW      Why?

WOMAN      Cindy. You know, like the doll.

ANDREW      It's not like the doll. The doll is Sindy with an 'S'.

WOMAN      Makes no difference

ANDREW      And also Sindy was British, not American. America had  
                 Barbie.

WOMAN        How do you know this? How long have you known her?  
Cindy.  
*Beat.*

ANDREW       Since I was seventeen.

WOMAN       High school.

ANDREW       Right.

WOMAN       High-school sweethearts.

ANDREW       Well.

WOMAN       That's so *cool* dude, that's like, so rad.

ANDREW       Enjoying yourself?

WOMAN       Do you miss her?

ANDREW       Of course I miss her. I miss everybody... and I don't know.  
I don't even know what's happened to them, if they've been  
called in for questioning –

WOMAN       They have.

ANDREW       And I don't know by who...

WOMAN       The CIA.

ANDREW       And where they are and what they're being asked...

WOMAN       They're being asked if they had any notion of what you  
planned to do, whether they had anything to do with it,  
whether they currently have any contact with you, whether  
they have plans to join you, and if they have any sense of  
what your future movements might be, I would imagine  
that assuming neither your girlfriend, your friends or your  
parents say anything even slightly incriminating they'll be  
let free from questioning in two maybe three weeks.

ANDREW       Okay.

*Beat.*

WOMAN I mean what you did is big.

ANDREW I know.

WOMAN Off-the-scale massive.

ANDREW Yeah.

WOMAN And the thing is that as we now know they can get access to all your emails web-browsing phone lines, and it's been a few days so any encryption you used, I'd imagine they're through that, so they don't really need to ask those people anything, if they go through the files they probably have it already.

ANDREW Yeah.

WOMAN So why are they bringing them in like that?

ANDREW To put pressure on me.

WOMAN Correct, they're actually hoping that you do still have some kind of contact with Mindy –

ANDREW Cindy

WOMAN – or your parents and that by bringing them in and cutting them off and making their lives hell, you will break and snap and get on a plane and give yourself up, driven by the innate national pride that's been bred in you from the moment you were born in the USA. This is why all the kids in your weirdass motherfucking country swear allegiance to the flag and all that shit. Precisely to ensure that you don't do things like this.

ANDREW They won't hurt them.

WOMAN You don't think?

ANDREW Will they?

WOMAN I don't –

ANDREW I'm asking you.

WOMAN Oh. I don't know. No. Can they? No. Surely that's illegal.

ANDREW But – there might be psychological –

WOMAN Oh sorry well yeah psychological stuff absolutely, isolation, intimidation, lies, deceit and a slow breaking-down of self-esteem they'll try all that, they'll do that to them but that's okay because none of that stuff is real or hurts or has any long-lasting effect, oh wait – it does.

ANDREW You find this funny?

WOMAN You know I actually don't find any of this funny at all no.

*Pause.*

ANDREW Okay.

*Pause.*

WOMAN You want to pick up that phone and call Sandy?

ANDREW That's not her name.

WOMAN You'd like Susie to hear your voice?

ANDREW We were together twelve years of course I want to pick up the phone and speak to her.

WOMAN But you understand you really shouldn't?

ANDREW Yeah.

WOMAN Try it.

ANDREW What?

WOMAN Try and pick up that phone and call Lindsey.

ANDREW *Cindy.*



WOMAN        Go on.

ANDREW       I don't want to.

WOMAN       I know but try it.

ANDREW       You're getting really fucking irritating.

WOMAN       Yeah I know so go on just go over there and try and call her.

*He does.*

                  You see?

ANDREW       No dialling tone.

WOMAN       You know why?

ANDREW       What?

WOMAN       We had it disconnected before you got here.

ANDREW       Okay.

WOMAN       You know why?

ANDREW       ...

WOMAN       We don't trust you. For all we know this could be some kind of infiltration, you could be someone actually working for the FBI, the CIA, the British Secret Service, the British Metropolitan Police, they all conduct secret operations lasting years we know this now, and there's no real limits in practice on what they can do, on the situations they can get themselves in so we now have everyone under suspicion the whole time because in the end we can't know. None of us can know. The only way we develop trust in the end is... well... time.

ANDREW       ...

WOMAN       Time.

ANDREW ...

WOMAN Because you only have one life. And every week, every month you're stuck in undercover work, you're using it up, and most people aren't prepared to do more than a few months of that, so by the time you've been with the movement for years, like me, people pretty much know that I am who I say I am.

ANDREW George.

WOMAN Exactly.

ANDREW Which is not your real name.

WOMAN You've been with us three days Andrew, of course it's not my real fucking name.

*Pause.*

ANDREW I'm not with you.

WOMAN Yes.

ANDREW I'm not.

WOMAN According to the entire world's press you are, you might be having this meeting, where you're staying, this has all been arranged by us, you're with us.

ANDREW I've said nothing about what you do, I've made no commitments.

WOMAN You've been willing to take advantage of our expertise.

ANDREW You said you valued what I'd done and you offered your help.

WOMAN And you quickly took it.

ANDREW I know I'm associated but I don't think I'm *part* of anything right now. Right now I'm pretty much on my own

—

WOMAN Well. Yeah. You are. No one else has ever done what you've done.

ANDREW No.

WOMAN In the history of the world, it's simply not been possible, to release as much as you have so quickly. With such effect. You have leaked such a huge amount of metaphorical fluid, it's like a tsunami of liquid just sprayed over them, covering them –

Isn't it?

And it's not just scale, it's how important this stuff is, its depth, its height. It's like you've blown the biggest fucking whistle you can imagine, like a whistle the size of the Pentagon. You've blown that massive Pentagonal whistle really fucking hard.

I don't think the USA has a punishment proportional to people like you.

Do they?

I mean they can only kill you once.

ANDREW Maybe leave me on my own now?

WOMAN Come on. No. What? Really?

ANDREW Really.

WOMAN You like me being here.

ANDREW Haven't you got anything else to do?

WOMAN No.

ANDREW You must.

WOMAN Do you fancy me?

ANDREW Jesus.

WOMAN      come on

ANDREW     No.

WOMAN     You do.

ANDREW     No.

WOMAN     I've been getting a vibe, if I can call it that –

ANDREW     No you haven't.

WOMAN     Do I look like Cindy?

ANDREW     No.

WOMAN     How am I different?

ANDREW     Cindy's blonde.

WOMAN     I'm blonde.

ANDREW     No you're not.

WOMAN     Underneath.

ANDREW     Okay.

WOMAN     This is dyed.

ANDREW     No it isn't.

WOMAN     Okay it isn't. I'm attractive though, an objectively attractive person, It's not a matter of opinion.

ANDREW     No.

WOMAN     Yeah.

ANDREW     No.

WOMAN     A bit.

ANDREW     Stop. Just stop. Stop.

*Beat.*

WOMAN        How else?

ANDREW       What?

WOMAN        How else am I different to Cindy Windy Cindy?

ANDREW       Cindy's funny.

WOMAN        Ah. Clever.

ANDREW       Yes she is. Exactly.

WOMAN        I mean you were clever with your little insult there.  
But okay Cindy's clever what has she got then?

ANDREW       She's –

WOMAN        Qualifications. Did she go to Cambridge?

ANDREW       Of course not.

WOMAN        I did.

ANDREW       Well done.

WOMAN        Thanks it was really hard.

ANDREW       Who are you?

WOMAN        University though okay you're saying she went to  
university.

ANDREW       No after high school she went straight into business.

WOMAN        Okay, so when you say clever we're talking street smarts  
here, we're not talking actual proper university, knowing  
things, useful proper intelligence.

ANDREW       Fuck you.

WOMAN        She's not part of the intellectual elite, like me.

ANDREW       Jesus –

WOMAN        I can quote Latin.

ANDREW I honestly don't care what you / can do, so maybe just stop talking until you can say something that is genuinely and actually going to offer me something or help me out cos what I don't need at the moment is more... noise. Okay. You're still... okay...

WOMAN You think that's not useful it actually is. Dinner parties in high-level company pretty girl quoting Latin they are eating out of my hand, I'm telling you they should teach that at school, bring it back, they used to teach both those things being pretty and speaking Latin I can see why. Okay. Okay so you don't fancy me. We'll leave that for now, but so that you know I don't fancy you at all, not in a sex way, but I think we're getting on we are, we are. You and me, this is a thing, this is a relationship you're going to remember.

ANDREW That's true.

WOMAN Ita vero.  
That's Latin for 'yeah'.  
*Beat.*

ANDREW Why are you here?

WOMAN Well far be it for me to remind you Andrew but you released hundred of thousands of highly confidential –

ANDREW I mean here in this room now, you could be doing some other work, there's a security guard outside to protect me, presumably when he gets here he gets here –

WOMAN – *if* he gets here –

ANDREW – and there's nothing I or you can do to hurry that up so why are you keeping me company like this?

WOMAN You want the truth or something that will make you feel good?

ANDREW The truth won't make me feel good?

WOMAN        The truth will not.

ANDREW       Okay.

WOMAN        The truth will make you feel even shitter than you do right now.

And I can see how inside, you're upset, and crying and nearly panicking, you're covering it well, it's not as bad as I would have imagined, but you might not want me to lay on even more right at this moment.

ANDREW       Just tell me why – yes – tell me the truth. Why are you here?

WOMAN        You know why, I'm liaising with him about –

ANDREW       I mean right now, you've got nothing to add, or offer, we're waiting for him to make contact so why are you still in the room? Saying all this crap, goofing around?

*Beat.*

WOMAN        We're worried you might kill yourself.

ANDREW       I...

Really?

WOMAN        Hmm. Yeah.

*Beat.*

I mean this is a thing that we've been noticing and it makes complete sense, the media and governments and corporations are yet to admit it, but these days when someone like you, a whistleblower, or it could equally be someone that's really fucked up in their job and got the blame, or it could be someone accused falsely or not of a crime, or even the victim of a crime, but any of these people, when the full spotlight of the media the information, the internet is on them with millions, really

millions of people talking about them – this is a truly contemporary phenomenon – these people, like you, have the certain knowledge that this moment will define them in the eyes of everyone they meet from now on for the rest of their lives, that it is now actually impossible for this not to be what their entire life is all about. We’ve noticed, and we’re not pretending that this needs science or anything, we’ve noticed that at about the stage of the story you’re at now, they often try to take their own life and sometimes they succeed, we’re talking Dr David Kelly, he’s probably the best example, but there was also that woman in hospital, the nurse who answered the phone to the Australian hoax DJs, who wanted the medical information about Kate and William, you remember, you remember that?

ANDREW      No.

WOMAN        Oh. Maybe it was just a British... Anyway, point is, millions of people hate you now, and short of drastic facial surgery and some kind of new identity this is what your life is going to be about. You’re twenty-eight and you will never be known for research, or politics, or art, or music, or sport, or charity, or anything else, you will be for ever known solely for what you did three days ago.

ANDREW       You’re working me up to it.

WOMAN        I’m naming it to make it less likely.

*Beat.*

ANDREW       How would I kill myself in this room?

WOMAN        We took away anything obvious but there’s still... well I’m not going to lay them out for you, am I! Huh! Clever... but yeah there’s actually still a few ways, looking at it, that I could think of –

ANDREW       I’m fine. I’m not going to do anything.

WOMAN        That’s strange. Yes. I can see that, you appear quite calm.



But that's odd. Most people would *freak OUT* right now, but you're not. Why not?

ANDREW I told you I worked it through, obviously not all the details, and yeah, I suppose, I am freaking out to some extent.

WOMAN To some extent. Yeah. A bit. Not a lot though. Not a reasonable *human* amount.

ANDREW It wouldn't do any good.

WOMAN Pragmatism.

ANDREW I suppose.

*Beat.*

WOMAN Were you running away from something?

ANDREW No.

WOMAN Was there a push for you as well as a pull?

ANDREW No, it was – what I saw, I just couldn't in all conscience –

WOMAN Yeah I've seen in the interview I didn't entirely buy it then either. I mean there's loads of people like you working there and in all sorts of jobs who think this stuff but none of them are prepared to jack in their *entire life*. There must be a reason this appealed, you can't be that selfless.

ANDREW Well... I don't know what to say. Except your lack of belief in people is really upsetting.

WOMAN No. No. I think people can be good, just not on the scale that you're talking about with these sort of consequences. Either you didn't realise the consequences –

ANDREW I did.

WOMAN Yeah I think you did. Or you did, but you thought it was worth it because you're so fucking altruistic.

ANDREW Right.

WOMAN Hmm. OR – there's a third option which is that the life you're now embarking on is, in your judgement, preferable to the one you left behind, and yes – that's what I think is going on.

ANDREW What, like I killed someone, or –

WOMAN No.

ANDREW You know committed a crime and now I'm running away.

WOMAN No I don't think it needs to be anything like that.  
I just think you might have been incredibly bored.

I think maybe you craved some kind of true adventure.

ANDREW That's trivialising it – you know I am at risk of death either by an assassin or my own country –

WOMAN My grandmother was Jewish, lived in Poland, she had to escape from the Nazis across Europe, her family died, and then when she got to Britain she had to learn another culture and language, and still she was being bombed, and attacked, and then bring her family up with a second husband, then emigrate to Australia, a country she knew even less about, then come back, and in the meantime she published twenty-three books and met an unfeasible number of famous and important people. I mean lives like that don't happen any more not in that kind of continent-crossing, life-and-death, history-making, autobiography-busting way. I'm not saying they wanted it but that generation's lives were eventful. To say the least.

ANDREW Right.

WOMAN Compare that to you, and Cindy, in Kentucky Fricking Chicken –

ANDREW Look –

WOMAN I'm not being facetious it's a fact that with the homogenisation of branding, with the transfer of information from continent to continent the possibility for mystery and real travel and adventure has actually lessened. All countries have a McDonald's, the vast majority of places can be looked up on Google Maps, what are the chances of truly exploring? A man finds a twelve-metre waterfall in Canada that no one's bothered to write down, it makes headline news these days around the world? So what are the chances of truly exploring, truly changing. Zero. Unless. Andrew. You're you. You changed the world three days ago.

ANDREW You think that.

WOMAN I do.

Actually?

I think you may have brought down the United States of America.

ANDREW Right.

WOMAN Not overnight. But China is laughing at them. The last remaining high ground they occupied, that of freedom, has been taken from them. Turns out, from what you've shown us, they spy on their people exactly the same way the party does in Shanghai, exactly the same way the KGB or whatever you want to call it does in Russia – you, Andrew, have proven this as a fact. The USA is not free, and it's worse than anywhere else, because unlike China, or Russia, that was the whole point of that country. That was its USP. Its *raison d'être*. The primary principle upon which the fathers did the founding. To be free, from the governments, the masters, the rules of oppressive regimes and churches. That was the high ground it should have occupied, and so far has your country fallen Andrew. So far now.

ANDREW I don't want to destroy it. I want to restore the balance

between the elected and the electorate. I want the country to get better.

WOMAN It can't. It either is the thing it is, or it doesn't exist. America has always used all the powers possible. It's a torturing country, it's a spying country, it's a country that props up dictators, and funds terrorism. It does all the things it says it fights against, in service to some greater cause which it calls freedom. But if now, you say it never even had that... well...

It's the latest icon to fall.  
We find that nothing is noble.  
Nothing is righteous.  
Nothing is good.

ANDREW Whether you want to believe it or not I actually love my country, I did what I did in the hope that it will get better, that it will prompt action.

WOMAN It won't.

ANDREW You don't know.

WOMAN It will prompt proposals to action and the specific practices you uncovered will cease, for a while. But others will continue. The issue is that it's either a technological problem or a governmental one.

ANDREW Can we talk about something else?

WOMAN Either you say the government is good but technology has got too powerful and has to be reined in somehow, or, you say technology is good but the power of government has to be reined in. No one can agree, so nothing happens.

ANDREW What about corporations?

WOMAN Well that's a whole other thing.

ANDREW Do you have a boyfriend?

WOMAN Ah – well – oh – Not a boyfriend no.

ANDREW Girlfriend then?

WOMAN I have a relationship with a horse.

ANDREW OH!

WOMAN What?

ANDREW Okay – just – don't –

WOMAN He fucks me like – wooah – Jesus you wouldn't imagine, he goes out racing, I watch, then we go for dinner, you know somewhere classy like Burger King, then back to his, we lie on the straw, and... well it's not to everyone's taste but – talk about reining it in.

ANDREW You couldn't have just said I can't tell you?

WOMAN No because I can tell you, it's not the army, we're all, I can tell you what I want, I choose not to because I don't *know* you.

ANDREW Right.

WOMAN So much like the government of your country, I prefer to remain in the shadows and distract you with whimsy.

ANDREW Isn't that quite a contradiction for an organisation that advocates full disclosure?

WOMAN Yeah well absolutely and that's not the half of it, we've got quite a lot of contradiction going on, as you'll find out. I mean don't for god's sake look for a coherent set of values or a constructive way forward in us lot. I mean we're not that far off a bunch of fucking anarchists, it's like herding cats, like taming fucking I don't know... plants. As far as I can work out, and there's nothing really written down about this – which is a very contemporary way for a protest group to operate – in cells you know – the very definition of 'wiki' – so as far as I can work out, the only principle on

which we operate is that governments cannot proclaim to be working for the people if they withhold huge amounts of information from the people. How can they be accountable if the majority of what they do that's important is restricted? How do we know what really happened in Afghanistan or Iraq, or with the police, or Hillsborough or Stephen Lawrence, or phone hacking? Are these references too British for you?

ANDREW      Some of them.

WOMAN      Then Watergate, Union Carbide, Bush's win in Florida, I mean we really want to allow these people to hide behind confidentiality laws? Which would mean that at the ballot box we're just guessing? But yeah, when it comes to the actual people that do it – me or him, to take two examples, we're both incredibly secretive. I suppose the difference is we don't profess anything else. We're not saying trust us. We're saying just look at the information.

ANDREW      Okay.

WOMAN      You interested in any of this?

ANDREW      Well you know I kind of think I'm done now, I'm not going to make a habit of it so –

WOMAN      Well you can't mate.

ANDREW      No.

WOMAN      You've shot your load.

ANDREW      Yeah.

WOMAN      So what now? That's the question. That's what's of interest to us. What happens to you now?

ANDREW      Do you have friends?

WOMAN      Yes. Loads. Uni friends mostly. We're a tight-knit group. Argue into the night issues of politics, society, high-level

intelligent debate about actually no I don't have any friends  
I work too hard.

You see? You just can't tell.

*Pause.*

ANDREW I will have that drink.

WOMAN I thought you might.

ANDREW

WOMAN

ANDREW ...

WOMAN Lonely.

ANDREW Right at this moment, I am. Yes.

WOMAN You don't give a shit about any of all of that now do you?  
You just want a hug.

ANDREW ...

*She edges closer.*

*Then squeezes his shoulder, awkwardly.*

WOMAN Is that okay? Thought a hug might be a bit... much?

So... just thought I'd give you a... *squeeze?*

*She does it again.*

*Then pats him.*

It'll be okay.

*Her hand comes to rest on him.*

Your parents are called Ellen and Harry.

ANDREW Yes they are.

WOMAN        You see I know that.

ANDREW       Yes I can see that you know that well.

WOMAN        You know what else I know?

ANDREW        What?

WOMAN        Your SAT scores for every year you took them.

ANDREW        Okay.

WOMAN        You know what else?

ANDREW        What?

WOMAN        Pretty much everything I know about Sam, I know about Michael, I know about Terri – oh – oh well I know about Sara. I know the car you drive, sorry, drove, I know the clothes you wore when you were seventeen with the... wow – *hair*, I know where you've been on holiday every time you've been to another country which isn't that many, if we don't count Hawaii which we shouldn't, in fact you've doubled that number in the last couple of days.

ANDREW        Of course you know all that, it's on Facebook, Instagram, a child could probably find out all of that –

WOMAN        Yeah, that's my point, the fact is that if anyone really wants to know about someone else now, you can. That's just how it is, you have no privacy really you have no rights –

ANDREW        You do have rights –

WOMAN        Oh okay you do, but, you know, in reality, as soon as you get a Google account or go on Facebook whatever and you tick that little box with all the terms and conditions that you never read, you don't. And it goes further than that if we were going to expend all this energy helping you out we had to go as deep as possible, so I'm not just talking stuff you can find on Facebook, I'm talking *everything*, I think probably I know more about you than anyone else on the



planet right now, I certainly know more than your parents or Cindy, I think I possibly know more than you do about yourself given the amount of cannabis you smoked at college. So you want to know anything about yourself just ask.

ANDREW I don't.

WOMAN Test me.

ANDREW I really don't. You know why? Because none of that makes any difference now. This is like the blankest cleanest slate I could start with. I have a single bag of stuff and that's it, that's all I now own. I know you, here, and that's it. As you've pointed out I don't speak Russian, I'm not sure how I'm going to survive here. I don't know how to get food, I can't read this fucking alphabet. It's *all* strange to me here, all alien, I don't know what's going to happen tomorrow, or next month or next year, where I'm going to move on to, or what my life is about. I don't know what my future is – if Cindy going's to come out and stay or –

WOMAN I thought you split up with Cindy.

ANDREW You said you knew everything about me.

WOMAN I do. I thought you split up with Cindy.

ANDREW –

WOMAN –

ANDREW That was the last call I made.

WOMAN Right.

ANDREW To break up with her.

WOMAN You knew what was going to happen and you made her believe you didn't love her any more.

ANDREW Yeah.

WOMAN      Problem is, when she found out what you did, she worked out why you broke up with her, and she doesn't believe it and she's still in love with you and determined to find you, so that plan didn't work, you should be lucky we're handling that side of things now, because from the evidence you are a bit shit at it.

ANDREW     Is he coming then?

*Beat.*

Or is he going to call me? *Beat.*

Or not?

*Pause.*

WOMAN      You want to know some things about Russia?

*Beat.*

You want to know some things about Russia?

ANDREW     I can look on Wikipedia.

WOMAN      I'm more fun. Your laptop's gone mysteriously missing anyway. And you don't have a phone so –

ANDREW     No I do. I don't have a charger that fits to sockets on the wall so it's not working right now but I do have one. It's in my case.

WOMAN      It's not. We took it.

ANDREW     Give it back.

WOMAN      For your own good. As you are aware, if you have a phone, they can find out where you are.

*Pause.*

So you want to know some things then?

ANDREW     About Russia.

WOMAN        Yeah.

ANDREW       What?

WOMAN       Population?

ANDREW       ?

WOMAN       144 million.

ANDREW       Okay.

WOMAN       It's bigger than Pluto.

ANDREW       Right.

WOMAN       Each Russian, on average, consumes eighteen litres of alcohol per year, double what experts consider dangerous.

ANDREW       What do you want me to do with that?

WOMAN       This is where you are and I think it's important you know the facts.

ANDREW       Why?

WOMAN       Because I don't think you're that bright, Andrew. I think you're actually a little bit stupid – I'm not being mean here, but if you're going to survive, if you're going to make any contribution going forward the only thing you can rely on is your brain and your ability to articulate yourself. You're fucking Nick Leeson, by which I don't mean you're fucking Nick Leeson, I mean that's the equivalent of who you are. He could only make a meaningful contribution and do so well in the 'media' after he got out of jail because he had a unique combination of experience and intelligence. Now you have a unique experience but your intelligence needs work.

ANDREW       I'm smart.

WOMAN       You don't know who Nick Leeson is, do you?

ANDREW Another British reference?

WOMAN Er – yeah, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't know it. I know loads of Americans and I'm British – well – sort of –

ANDREW I was employed by the US Government at an extremely high level, which should give some indication of –

WOMAN You're medium smart, you're red-brick, middle-scale, mid-league bright, but you need to be elite Oxford Harvard bright.

ANDREW I went to Harvard.

WOMAN Why are you lying? I know where you went.

ANDREW I was testing you because I wanted to do something in the conversation.

WOMAN Then say something – have something to offer and say something.

ANDREW ...

WOMAN This is what I mean you don't have it click click like off the tip of your tongue, it takes a thought, but you need it right there.

ANDREW Why?

WOMAN If you're going to become a spokesperson for us.

ANDREW Spokesperson?

WOMAN That's the current idea.

ANDREW No.

WOMAN Well we're going to want *something* back for all this –

ANDREW I'm not going to become a spokesperson for you.

WOMAN You're very respected at the moment and the feeling is you'd restore some creditability to our once-esteemed

organisation. We've got a bit stuck in scandal recently –

ANDREW I'm not becoming a face for your organisation so –

WOMAN Andrew you have absolutely no choice.

ANDREW I do.

WOMAN No. You have no freedom, no choice, at the moment you don't even have a passport. You are in this country but you have no rights and currently no asylum. To get any or all of these things you are going to need help and contacts. We have them, but we aren't going to give them to you for free. We want you to be our man in Moscow.

ANDREW Where?

WOMAN *Moscow*. That's where you currently are.

ANDREW I know I meant what does that mean? 'Your man in –'

WOMAN It's a Graham Greene reference. You see? You don't know shit. You don't even know where you are. This isn't a charitable thing. This transaction. This is a deal.

ANDREW But I don't subscribe to your policy.

WOMAN We don't really have one as I said before. We all have disagreements all the time.

ANDREW But there are big disagreements I have.

WOMAN Fine. The only thing you need to be committed to is freedom of information. And even that you can be nuanced on. At the moment you've got one of the most retweeted, pictured and repictured faces on the planet. That's good. That's what's got you this room, this hotel, that's what we're funding. Come on you know that.

ANDREW So I have to –

WOMAN You have to check with us what you want to say about stuff and assuming it's not completely off beam and weird then

go for it. When things happen.

ANDREW From Russia.

WOMAN Moscow yes. This is where you'll live.

*Pause.*

So. What? Why aren't you talking now? What's going on?

ANDREW I'm not going to stay in Moscow for ever –

WOMAN Why not?

ANDREW I don't need to join you.

WOMAN We're going to help you.

ANDREW You're going to help me yes, because it benefits you. You need me.

WOMAN Don't step to me small man.

ANDREW – like you said this is probably the most important leak ever – in terms of impact this dwarfs what you've done before – and more than that, it justifies itself in clearer ways. You want me associated with you, because you need me, because, I'm right, in this instance – people are realising that I'm incontrovertibly justified, which was not the same with all the military secrets you put out.

WOMAN Not me.

ANDREW Your organisation.

WOMAN Well we're getting into collective responsibility now.

ANDREW Okay let's get into that then.

WOMAN We don't really – that's not how we work, we're more like an idea that is constantly evolving depending on the views of the current members and the response to the need of the – oh okay I'm not even convincing myself. Yes we make,

made, mistakes, not ones I'm particularly into justifying I didn't want to release all of that I said it would do us harm and it did.

ANDREW He ordered it didn't he?

WOMAN He... did. Yes he did.

ANDREW Despite all of you saying it was a bad idea.

WOMAN That's correct.

ANDREW So why do you still work for him?

WOMAN Because ultimately he's vain, and he's doing this more for himself than for anybody else, and he has a very dark side which we won't go into, but ultimately underneath all that (and maybe you need all that to do what he does) but underneath all that, the basic idea of what he's doing is right.

ANDREW You could be talking about Stalin.

WOMAN Oh. Please. No. Don't do that. The basic idea is right, but the nature of it being so loosely controlled is that it's loosely controlled – however I suppose the appeal for me – and maybe this is not so different from what you described earlier Andrew – is that I may be a player, or at the very least present when events happen which change the course of history. I may be part of that and if I am close to those events I may be able to alter them. And to my extremely clever mind, that is a good use of my resources, even if it means hanging out with people I don't like very much, and being close to decisions I don't agree with.

ANDREW The fact is, you need me more than I need you.

*Pause.*

WOMAN You think that?

ANDREW All this time you're speaking with me. The money you

must have spent for the accommodation and lawyers.

As you said yourself, I represent a chance for you to get back in the game. To restore your credibility.

*Beat.*

No.

WOMAN I thought we were getting on...

ANDREW I am not being your spokesperson. If you're offering help that's great, and I've no doubt you'll tell everyone you're helping me, but you don't get anything actively in return from me, I'm not going to be part of your group, or any group. I'm not going to become a face for hire. I'm just... me.

WOMAN I see.

Well... In that case I'll tell him you're not interested.

ANDREW Sure.

WOMAN He won't make contact.

ANDREW Okay.

WOMAN We'll leave you in the hotel tonight, then you're on your own. It's a shame but –

ANDREW You're going to help me anyway, what I represent –

WOMAN How's the Russian?

ANDREW I can wait.

WOMAN Not great is it, but anyway dostvidaniya, I hope you get to see the dostoprimechatelnosti before you get kicked out.

ANDREW You need to be associated with me.

WOMAN Are you going to help us out?



Andrew?

Last chance?

Wanna play ball?

No?

Okay.

Have a think.

See you later.

Maybe.

*She smiles and goes.*

*He stands for a moment.*

*Then blackout.*

2.

*A while later.*

*A knock at the door.*

ANDREW      Who is it?

*A MAN enters, wearing a suit. He's very serious.*

MAN            Hi.

ANDREW      Is it open?

MAN            Yes.

*Andrew.*

ANDREW      Are you.

MAN            What?

ANDREW      Are you him? You don't –

MAN            Who?

ANDREW      Him?

MAN            Er... I don't know if you should be expecting me. Did you know I was coming?

ANDREW      That depends who you are.

MAN            My name is George.

ANDREW      George?

MAN            I'm here to help you. He sent me.

ANDREW      He...

MAN            Yes, you know –

ANDREW I'm... I've been told I should stay here and that he'll make contact –

MAN Er – don't think so. Ha! Who told you that?

ANDREW The other, the...

MAN What? Other?

ANDREW The lady. It doesn't matter.

MAN Lady?

ANDREW There was a lady?

MAN What lady?

ANDREW Sent by him, working with him, she was looking after me while I waited to see him. She worked for him.

MAN I work for him.

ANDREW You... what?

MAN There isn't a lady. Hasn't been a lady. He sent me here to help you out. He's trapped, you know he can't leave London, that's why he sent me.

ANDREW Wait – there was a woman. A lady who said she was...

MAN Was?

ANDREW ...okay...

MAN What did you tell her?

ANDREW I don't – a lot.

MAN Where's she gone?

ANDREW She left.

MAN When?

ANDREW      A hour ago. Not long.

MAN          She's not working for us.

ANDREW      How do you know?

MAN          Are you listening, Andrew, I know because I work for him  
and she doesn't. What did you tell her?

ANDREW      ...nothing.

MAN          Really?

ANDREW      She seemed to know most things already.

MAN          She... right. Excellent. Right. Well...  
That's a shame.

ANDREW      So you're...

MAN          George.  
Hello.  
What was her name?

ANDREW      ...she called herself Miss Prism.

MAN          First name?

ANDREW      Of course I knew it wasn't her real name.

MAN          Did she give a first name?

ANDREW      George.

MAN          What?

ANDREW      George.

MAN          Yes?

ANDREW      *She said her first name was George.*

MAN          George is a boy's name.

ANDREW Well that's what I said.

MAN George is *my* name.

*Beat.*

I think she was playing with you.

ANDREW So who was she?

MAN Did you ask her for any identification?

ANDREW No but... presumably even if I did she could have got it forged.

MAN That's true.

ANDREW So she could have been anything? Anyone.

Journalist. Spy.

MAN Right.

ANDREW And I told her...

MAN What?

ANDREW Well actually she seemed to know a lot about me already.

MAN Everyone knows everything about you Andrew.  
It's everywhere. You can't very well do what you did and then ask for any kind of privacy. You are probably the most open target in terms of digging for dirt, you better not have done anything too weird. Ever.

ANDREW I haven't.

MAN Ever.

ANDREW I really haven't.

MAN You – Oh come on Andrew. Everyone's done something weird at some point.

Haven't they?

I have.

Haven't they?

ANDREW

*Pause.*

So she knows where I am.

MAN

Yes apparently she does.

*The MAN reaches into his case.*

Chocolate. Thought you might want it. Sugar levels.

ANDREW

Yeah.

*ANDREW takes it, and eats it.*

MAN

So. I need to assess you for help.

ANDREW

Have you got any identification?

MAN

What?

ANDREW

You're saying she could have been anyone and I should have asked for identification so have you?

*The MAN reaches into his pocket and gives ANDREW his passport.*

This is your passport.

MAN

Right.

ANDREW

Well no, that just tells me who you are –

MAN

That's what identification means Andrew.

ANDREW

I need to know who you work for. If you're really acting for him.

MAN

What you mean... like... a membership card?

ANDREW No.

MAN We're not a *gym*.

ANDREW I don't know – papers.

MAN *Papers?*

ANDREW Something.

MAN Well I suppose the passport is who I am, and you could google me or something and that would tell you – or call someone.

ANDREW I can't call someone.

MAN Why not?

ANDREW They disconnected the phone. They – the woman – the phone was disconnected.

MAN No it isn't.

ANDREW What?

MAN The phone's working. Call someone if you like and check me out.

ANDREW *stands and goes to the phone. Picks it up.*

See?

*Puts it down again.*

ANDREW I can't think of anyone I could call that you couldn't have influenced. I don't think there's really any way of me knowing who you are. For sure. Any more than with her.

MAN Andrew –

ANDREW Is there?

MAN Maybe not. And that's because you don't have a team. You don't have resources. You have your journalist friends, and

they help you get information but they can't look after you not in the end. They can't look at someone and say yes, that is who they say they are. We can do that for you. I can do that. I'm not him but I'm his right-hand man with the same resources at my disposal. I can protect you.

ANDREW But only if you are really working for who you say you are.

MAN Yes.

ANDREW So how do I know?

MAN It looks like you've reached the point where you're going to have to trust someone.

*Beat.*

You don't have long, Andrew. You realise that? This is causing all kinds of problems and the Russians want it fixed by tomorrow. If not, then they might hand you over. They don't have a good relationship with the United States, but there's many other factors in play here, and if they bargain you against something else...

*ANDREW starts to make something with the wrapper from the chocolate.*

Do you really have any idea what you've done?

ANDREW Yes, you've seen the interview, I'm fully aware of what I've done, of the importance of it –

MAN But are you aware of how unbelievably dangerous it is. Not just for you – I mean it is dangerous for you, I'll come onto that in a minute – but dangerous for the United States of America. For western civilisation. For all the things you hold up as being important. Freedom. Democracy. How can we have these things if we don't have security?

ANDREW What? – Wait – what are you saying?

MAN I'm making the case that from their point of view. You are a



child. You may have a noble cause, as you see it, but you are thinking short-term, the next year or two, maybe the next decade, you're not thinking of the broader Churchillian sweep of history. And in that sweep, the institutions which you have cracked open, and sought to destroy, are the very foundations of the society you rely on.

ANDREW     Those institutions mean nothing if... oh god... look, I'm really sorry but I'm not going through all this again, these arguments, I'm tired and we can do this another time.

*He carries on making the model...*

*Pause.*

*The MAN watches him.*

MAN         There are people that want to cut your head off.

*Beat.*

There are people that want to cut my head off too.

And the only thing, in the end that's stopping them cutting all our heads off, or setting off a bomb full of nails right next to us, is the security services. Is their ability, essentially, to predict the future.

ANDREW     You can have a drink if you want.

MAN         No thank you.

And you, by doing what you've done, have torn that system open. Every American citizen, every British citizen, every two-year-old child in those countries is going to become more vulnerable to attack because you will have taken away their ability to protect their own people.

ANDREW     I thought you said you worked for him.

MAN         I do.

ANDREW     Then why are you making this argument, surely –

MAN            There are things that have to be done in the dark.

ANDREW       Is this a lesson or –

MAN            There are things –

ANDREW       A tutorial – cos I'm not as young as I look – I am aware –

MAN            That have to be done to protect society, to enable society to function that society doesn't like, doesn't want to know about, doesn't want to see, wants to just be done, while we go out for the weekend, order a new kitchen, watch Netflix and look the other way. Drone attacks by our forces that render human beings to soup, interrogation techniques we *know* are effective but that could potentially be labelled torture if you were so-minded, and also the ability to see and hear *everything*. That last one has genuinely stopped terrorist attacks.

ANDREW       There's no evidence for that.

MAN            There is. But it's classified.

ANDREW       I'm not getting into this –

MAN            My point is that what you've done is dangerous, but you think you can avoid the cost. What we do is dangerous as well. But we're aware of the cost and we think it's worth doing it anyway.

ANDREW       I've been very careful about how this information is released, it's not like how you did it, I went to journalists and even now they're going through it, carefully redacting names.

MAN            There will be a mistake.

ANDREW       No, they've reassured me –

MAN            There will be a mistake, there always is. At least one person will die because of what you've done.

ANDREW I don't think that's inevitable at all.

MAN And the terrifying thought for you to contemplate right now is.

That person could be you.

ANDREW *finishes making the model. It's an intricate star.*

The American people didn't know that the United States was involved in torture, until it was revealed.

Or mass surveillance, until you made it public.

Perhaps there's other things they don't know about.

Like assassination. Like sending someone to another country to take out a problem.

And Andrew, you are one of your country's biggest problems at the moment.

ANDREW They wouldn't dare kill me. That would be too obvious –

MAN It would look like you took your own life.

They would send someone in. Who was experienced. And who could pretend to be someone you wanted to be close to.

An associate.

Then that person would, who would be an experienced professional, would arrange your death in such a way that it would look like all the attention, everything you'd done, had become too much, and so – now the work is over – you'd ended it all.

And were now dead. You now didn't exist. Those thoughts in your head, that you're thinking right now, would stop.

Reality would cease. Everything you did this for, wouldn't matter, because the world would to all intents and purposes,

to you, finish.

ANDREW What are you... are you threatening me?

MAN I'm saying the current danger level, to you, is very high.

I'm saying I could be anyone.

I'm saying perhaps I'm not working for him. I only said that so you'd let me in.

Perhaps I'm working for someone else, and you are about to die so quickly that you'll never know the truth.

I'm saying what was in the chocolate.

Nothing. There was nothing in the chocolate but would you like to be protected against that threat for the foreseeable future?

We can do that.

I can do that.

Are you crying?

*Long pause.*

We would like you to agree to work with us. To help us out. And in return. We'll look after you.

ANDREW I... uh... okay... I'm... my head is...

MAN What?

ANDREW I'm not feeling that well.

MAN Why not?

ANDREW Oh god.

MAN Just agree.

ANDREW No.

MAN Agree to work with us, and we'll take care of everything.

ANDREW Who was the woman?

MAN As I explained, she could have been anyone.  
Without proper resources you can never be sure.  
Anyone you meet from now, might be a threat.

ANDREW Can you come back?

MAN What?

ANDREW Come back in the morning.

MAN Leave you overnight?

ANDREW Yeah.

MAN I can but it's normally done overnight.  
Death.

ANDREW I just... need time.  
Please.

*The MAN looks at him for a while.*

MAN How about another bar of chocolate?  
*He takes it out. ANDREW looks for a moment.*  
Or not.

*ANDREW reaches for it.*

*The MAN moves it away.*

When you say yes.

*The MAN looks at him for a while.*

Don't open the door to anyone.

*He goes.*

ANDREW *sits*.

*Stares.*

*Alone.*

3.

*The night.*

*ANDREW is doing sit-ups without his top on.*

*A knock at the door.*

*ANDREW stops for a moment.*

*Then carries on with the sit-ups.*

*Another knock at the door.*

*A moment. ANDREW carries on.*

ANDREW      It's locked.

*The WOMAN comes in. She's looking possibly a little drunk, her hair is more relaxed than before. She holds a bag.*

WOMAN      Hi! Just checking if – Wow. Okay. Why have you?  
Okay. Should I come back at some other time?

ANDREW      No. It's fine.

WOMAN      Why have you got your shirt off?

ANDREW      I was exercising.

WOMAN      It's very late at night.

ANDREW      I couldn't sleep.

WOMAN      You know there's a gym downstairs? It's actually not bad, I mean the facilities here aren't great generally you have to pay through the nose for wifi, and the bar's okay if you can get past the prostitutes. Who by the way all have laptops. They sit there at tables and do what look like accounts on Excel on their Macbook Airs when they're not chatting to

men or being fucked. I mean, I just have so many feelings about that in so many directions, the rights and wrongs of that because no doubt these women are being so much better paid than I am, but would I do what they do? No I would not. Am I in a position, really to make that call? To say what I would do in their position? No I am not, because the alternatives might all be horrific. Sorry I'm rambling, I do that when it's late and I've been having fun, the point is the gym's okay. You could do exercise in the gym.

ANDREW I'm not allowed to leave my room.

WOMAN Oh yeah. Forgot.

ANDREW ...

WOMAN I could send one of those prostitutes up.

ANDREW No thanks.

WOMAN She could dress like Mindy. Use a false name. You could use a false name too.

And only speak through writing pictures on pieces of paper.

Or better, not speak at all.

And no eye contact.

Ultimate privacy. Total silence.

ANDREW I'm fine thanks.

WOMAN You ever used a prostitute?

ANDREW No.

WOMAN Me neither. I think it must be horrible, but it's one of those things isn't it, that's sort of become so acceptable in society it's easy not to think about it, but if you imagine actually letting someone invade you like that –

ANDREW I thought you'd have gone by now.



WOMAN        Gone? No. I'm staying here. Waiting for you to change your mind.

ANDREW       You're not who you say you are.

WOMAN        I know, I told you that. I explained the reasons why.

ANDREW       I mean you don't work for him. The other man.  
Also called George. He came and said they don't know anything about you.

WOMAN        What other man?

ANDREW        George.

*Beat.*

WOMAN        We don't work with anyone called George.

ANDREW        You mean...

WOMAN        Did he say he worked for us?

ANDREW        With him. He said he was sent by him to speak to me.

WOMAN        No that's me. That's what I'm here to do. This other man.  
Lying to you. Describe him.

ANDREW        He's –

WOMAN        He probably works for the Russian Government.  
Or a newspaper. A Russian newspaper. Or worse. He could even be a blogger Andrew.

                  Did he threaten you?

                  Who knows? But whoever, or *whatever* he was, *or is*, it's got nothing to do with us.

ANDREW        But are you going to find out about him?

WOMAN        You get people like that all the time.

ANDREW        It doesn't bother you.

WOMAN Nah.

ANDREW I thought you were protecting me?

WOMAN Well as I said, it's hard for me to justify that if you're not one of us.

*Pause.*

You're in a bit of mess aren't you?

*Long pause.*

ANDREW I think there's going to be a war.

*Beat.*

WOMAN Have you gone all –

ANDREW I'm serious.

WOMAN Okay. Okay, but with your shirt off, and saying things like that it makes me think you're either like Brando in *Apocalypse Now*, or that you're about to go on some kind of mass killing – when you say war –

ANDREW Have you got a bank account?

WOMAN So we're sort of skitting between topics here?

ANDREW ...

WOMAN Yes, I have got a bank account. I've got several actually. Different banks. Different names in fact, but that's –

ANDREW Do you trust that your money will be there? When you want it?

WOMAN Yes.

ANDREW ...

WOMAN No. That's why I have the money in different banks.

ANDREW In different countries I expect as well.

WOMAN        Yes.

ANDREW       So you don't trust the banks.

WOMAN       Okay, there's a glimpse here of where this is going –

ANDREW       You don't trust the government, we've established that.

WOMAN       Right.

ANDREW       God?

WOMAN       Yes? Oh sorry, you weren't talking to me.

ANDREW       Do you trust God?

WOMAN       No Andrew of course I don't trust God.

ANDREW       Or the church.

WOMAN       Ha!

ANDREW       ...

WOMAN       *No.*

ANDREW       We're ruling things out. Aren't we? Free-market capitalism.

WOMAN       I'm on the left.

ANDREW       Marxism then?

WOMAN       Wouldn't it be great if it actually worked though?

ANDREW       The law.

WOMAN       Of course not.

ANDREW       Police

WOMAN       Ha ha.

ANDREW       What then? What do you, with your degrees, and your self-proclaimed passion, what do you believe in? The thing that

you tie your spirit and your work and your exertion to, what is the set of values that gets you through the day?

WOMAN        Progress.

We get better.

ANDREW       I see no evidence for that.

*Long pause.*

WOMAN        Wifi!

ANDREW       What?

WOMAN        We've never had wifi before. And yes, I know that sounds facetious and I know you're feeling this passionately so bear with me – but we literally in the history of civilisation, have never invented or used wifi before, the dinosaurs didn't have it, the Victorians didn't have it, we didn't have it in the nineties.

ANDREW       That's progress?

WOMAN        That's an example. Violence across the world is down. Poverty is down. Education is up. Emancipation of women is up. We're not doing as badly as you think.

ANDREW       We're heading for something bad.

WOMAN        Maybe. But when that's done, we'll move on.

ANDREW       Yeah but actually when that's done you'll be dead and I'll be dead, I'm not talking about a small war like the Second World War, I'm talking about a complete and global collapse of every state, of every institution. We're like – that – far away. It's about to happen. We can't see it because we're hiding behind the walls but if you live in Sudan, Kenya, Iraq, Syria, Tunisia, Greece, Ukraine – you've felt literally felt on your skin the effect of this collapse. You know, in a way that we don't yet, what is about to happen.

WOMAN        No wifi.

ANDREW       No water, electricity, no food, no security, yes no wifi. This isn't a sort of conspiracy thing, this is real. And it will happen not because it needs to but because we don't trust anyone. We've all lost faith. As the rich get richer, and the politicians become so detached they cannot speak without hypocrisy, as the average experience means increasingly nothing, and resentment grows, when we all believe in nothing and credit, trust, is gone, it will all crumble.

*Beat.*

In many ways it already has.

WOMAN        You're going through a thing tonight, aren't you? It makes sense.

ANDREW       That's why I did it. Released all that stuff. Because the only way to stabilise our faith in what we're doing is to see the contradictions – expose the systems – and discuss and then move towards something we can get behind. Something more fair, more open and transparent. Not authority but real consent.

WOMAN        Yeah. That's right. Exactly. That's what we think too.

ANDREW       I don't know what you think. You don't articulate it. You're more into secrets than any of them.

WOMAN        To protect ourselves.

ANDREW       Well that's not going to work, so here's my deal, George. You tell me who you really are, your real name, and then I'll get on board. You trust me. I'll trust you. And we'll save the world.

WOMAN        Alright. Well. My real name is Sarah.

Sarah Lishman.

*Pause.*

Sorry. That's not true.

This is hard. Alright. Actually? Really...?

I'm Charlotte. Waters.

*Pause.*

Or am I?

You see this is impossible. I could just be making stuff up. How do I prove it? You know what I mean? Apart from saying that I'm this lady stood in this room with this face and body how do I go about proving to you in a way that will be acceptable, who I really am?

*He doesn't answer.*

*She reaches into the bag, and gives him a plastic cowboy hat.*

I got this from one of the girls downstairs. It was one of her props, and I thought since you were American, then you'd like it.

ANDREW ...

WOMAN An outlaw.

ANDREW ...

WOMAN Howdee.

*Pause.*

ANDREW It was what they wanted. Not just the founding fathers but the pilgrim fathers. When they got on the boat. They sought a place they could start again and act how they wanted. Free from authority and the systems that held them. They wanted to make something new and they did.

WOMAN After they wiped out the people who were already there. And before the country fell into an essentially lawless state

for quite a few decades.

ANDREW Yeah.

*Pause.*

I've never felt less free. Whether I'm in this room or not. Even before I did it. I felt utterly trapped. Between giving my bank statements for the whole year so I could get a mortgage, and my health payments, and my movements known to companies, and what I like, and who I am, and recorded on CCTV every day. Being in this room. At least there aren't any cameras here.

WOMAN Well...

ANDREW Really?

WOMAN Yeah. Probably the Russians put a couple in, that's why they put you here. And we've got one going too. So yeah – it's all monitored.

ANDREW Okay.

WOMAN Yee-ha. They'll love the hat.

*Beat.*

ANDREW Well it's going to have to be something to do with your body isn't it?

WOMAN Are you aware that sounds really creepy?

ANDREW I mean how do I know that you mean what you say, how do I know I'm not just one of many people you are lying to, and that this is fundamental to your life's work, well you're going to have to do something to yourself that's unique. That you haven't done before or since.

WOMAN I'm not going to sleep with you.

ANDREW I don't want you to sleep with me.

WOMAN I can get one of those girls if this is just a way to get a bit.

ANDREW Can you please take this seriously.

WOMAN What then?

ANDREW I don't know. Sacrifice something. Take your clothes off.

WOMAN I'm sorry?!

ANDREW No I don't mean – just all you've got is you, like you said a woman standing in a room. And we need to establish some trust. There's nothing else I can do. You know everything about me. You've got the resources and I've never hidden anything, but you need to give me something in return and you're absolutely right, all you've got is what's tangibly in this room. So I've got that far.

You come up with something then.

*She thinks.*

*Sits opposite him.*

*Then takes out a safety pin from her bag.*

*A relatively large one.*

WOMAN Okay. So here's my idea.

*She unbends the safety pin so it's a needle. Then gets a lighter and lights the end. Holds the tip of the needle in the flame.*

So that you trust me. I'm going to put this needle through my skin. This piece of skin here, between my thumb and forefinger. I will put an actual hole in it. And yes, that hole will heal, but it will leave a scar. And I don't have any other scars on my body. Not one. You can check if you like – well the bits you can see I'm not taking any clothes off – and I certainly don't have any other marks on my hands like this. So if I do this you will know that you are unique



and this is real and it matters to me and that I mean what I say. What do you think?

ANDREW Are you heating it up?

WOMAN I think it sterilises it or something I've never really done this before and I don't have a crack habit so I'm basically a novice but it can't do any harm right.

ANDREW Okay.

*Beat.*

WOMAN You're sure you need this?

ANDREW Yes. It's a start.

WOMAN A 'start'! Jesus. Ready?

ANDREW Yes.

*She's about to do it.*

Why does the phone have nothing in it?

*She stops.*

WOMAN I'm sorry?

ANDREW The phone. I opened it and there's nothing inside. Just a speaker and some electronics.

WOMAN Well that's what you'd find inside a phone that's basically –

ANDREW No you'd normally find something to operate the buttons, a little circuit board but in there it's literally just a speaker really.

WOMAN You want to – shall we do this in a minute?

ANDREW I thought it might... I thought it might be relevant.

WOMAN Well it's the Russians they've given you a fake phone haven't they? Bloody Russians.

ANDREW But it was you who said you had it disconnected.

WOMAN I know! And now it turns out it wasn't a real phone anyway, waste of bloody time! Look we're good, Andrew, but we can't get everything right.

*ANDREW just looks at her.*

May I?

ANDREW Okay.

*Beat.*

WOMAN This is really going to hurt, isn't it?

ANDREW I would imagine.

WOMAN You're going to let me do this?

ANDREW I think it will help. Yes.

WOMAN God. I'm glad I'm quite drunk. Actually get me that bottle of whiskey from the thing. The one I had before.

*He does.*

*She takes it. Drinks it. Sploshes some over the needle.*

Alcohol's supposed to – oh fuck it.

*She puts the needle through the piece of skin. Winces.*

ANDREW Are you okay?

WOMAN Yeah.

*Blood comes out.*

*It's really painful.*

*She finishes.*

Can you get me some tissue?

*He does.*

*He gives it to her.*

Jesus that hurt.

*She stops the bleeding.*

Okay. Okay.

*She drinks from the whiskey.*

Okay. So. Right. So. Happy?

*He nods.*

Good. Cos you can believe what you like but you saw that – that was like some blood, an actual bodily act. You want to see?

ANDREW      Yes.

*She shows him.*

WOMAN      Okay?

ANDREW      Yeah.

WOMAN      Right.

*Beat.*

So you see it does matter to me. To us. You matter a *huge* amount. You are unique. We do need you. I am who I say I am, and I'll always have a scar to prove it. If I did this all the time, my hand would be covered in scars, which as you can see, it's not.

So?

Are you in?

So you're in? Tomorrow we'll call him, and say that you're on board and you'll do what we say, and you'll let us help

you.

So?

*Very long pause.*

ANDREW      Okay.

WOMAN      Good to have you with us.

*She puts her hand out for him to shake.*

You want to shake?

*He doesn't. She puts her hand away.*

*She stands. Drinks from the whiskey.*

I'll see you in the morning.

ANDREW      Yes.

WOMAN      You going to put some clothes on now?

ANDREW      Maybe.

WOMAN      You like the hat?

ANDREW      Yes.

WOMAN      Good.

*Beat.*

ANDREW      What are you going to do now?

WOMAN      Well I'm – surprisingly enough I'm not so tired any more so I think I'm going to go downstairs and get another drink and maybe a sandwich, they do these all-night sandwiches that are only one type – it's like ham and something but they're very moreish so I'm going to have one or two of those and sit and drink, and maybe you know what even have a cigarette to mask this fucking pain you made me go through, and I'll hang out with the prozzies until they get

carted away. And eventually I'll fall asleep in my room and in the morning I'll come and get you. Nine o'clock.

ANDREW      What then? In the morning.

WOMAN      Firstly, get you out of this fucking room.

ANDREW      Right.

WOMAN      Then get your position in Russia secure.

ANDREW      Okay.

WOMAN      Passport. Get you granted asylum. Get Putin onside. We've got calls we can make. We'll try to get you on the phone with him as well.

*Beat.*

ANDREW      I can't believe you actually just did that.

WOMAN      Like you said. We've got to start somewhere. In the cold war we'd have had to sleep together to prove mutual trust. Now it's just self-mutilation.

ANDREW      Progress.

WOMAN      Exactly.

*She goes.*

*He sits.*

*He stands.*

*He goes to the wall.*

*Puts his hand on it.*

4.

*The next morning.*

*The WOMAN and the MAN stand in the room with ANDREW.*

ANDREW        I've been thinking about the phone.

WOMAN        You know we're both here right?

ANDREW        Yes, but that's not what bothers me.

WOMAN        Okay.

MAN            What about the phone?

ANDREW        That there's nothing in it.

WOMAN        He was going on about this last night –

ANDREW        It doesn't make sense.

WOMAN        There *is* something in it, you said there's a speaker and we told you it was the Russians.

ANDREW        Yes.

WOMAN        But more importantly, look! Me and George, the other one, we're both here together, are you not going to comment on that, since before we were apparently unaware of each other's existence?

ANDREW        Okay. What? You met in the bar downstairs.

WOMAN        No. We knew about each other, all along. We just wanted to test you. Good cop bad cop.

ANDREW        Who's who?

WOMAN        Isn't it obvious?

ANDREW ...

WOMAN/MAN I'm *bad cop*.

WOMAN Wait –

MAN Oh... I thought... sorry.  
(To ANDREW.) Slight... error.

ANDREW It doesn't matter.

MAN (To WOMAN.) I honestly thought you said –

WOMAN Andrew this is so much not how I expected this would go. You don't even seem to be paying attention. Look, we can tell you all this now that you've agreed to join us, we can reveal that actually both him and me were working for the same side.

ANDREW I had some of the whiskey and it wasn't really whiskey. It was sort of like whiskey but it was cheap.

WOMAN Russia doesn't really do whiskey.

MAN You should taste the vodka. Jesus Andrew if you were worrying about spending your life in Russia, about spending the rest of your days in a completely foreign country complete with actual Russians (and in parenthesis I *would* be worried about that) then the vodka is definitely some compensation.

ANDREW I tried the vodka.

MAN And?

ANDREW It was fine.

MAN Fine. Well maybe you don't know enough about vodka. The vodka is really fucking *good* –

ANDREW What's going to happen this morning?

MAN                      Possibly nothing, possibly a lot, calls have been made to see about that asylum that we're after, we've already got our best contacts speaking to the Russian authorities – they know they need to resolve this and really they want to take you in – I mean that's good news – they're just looking for a way they can take you without it seeming too petulant. We're going to help them with that.

WOMAN                And when we do find a way forward when we can get you out of this limbo and get you some kind of passport, we'll do a press conference but we think for the time being it's actually best if you keep your head down.

ANDREW                Right.

MAN                      Until we're all on a more stable footing.

ANDREW                Will I get to speak to him? You said –

MAN                      Andrew he's stuck in an embassy, in not an entirely different situation to you actually, communication is a constant challenge, especially secure communication – I assume you have some idea why – but yeah we can try to get him on the phone for you. If you'd like?

ANDREW                When?

MAN                      Now.

                              Or later.

                              Probably later.

ANDREW                Can I see your hand?

WOMAN                What?

ANDREW                Can I see your hand, from last night? How it's healing.

*The WOMAN looks at the MAN.*

WOMAN                (*To MAN.*) Actually shall we try to get him on the phone now?



MAN                    Now?!

WOMAN                Yes.

ANDREW               Your hand.

MAN                    We can't get him now. You know that. He's probably asleep.

WOMAN                (*With an implication...*) Well shall we *try anyway*?

MAN                    What?

                          Sorry. Am I... Am I missing something?

ANDREW               Just show me.

*Pause. The WOMAN rolls her eyes.*

WOMAN                Well you know what Andrew, it's actually healed extremely well.

ANDREW               What's happened to it?

WOMAN                Nothing. Look. Good as new.

ANDREW               But... I saw you...

WOMAN                Yeah. About that.

*She takes a fake-skin glove out of her bag.*

MAN                    Oh. Sorry. I get what you...

WOMAN                Old trick. Just in case. The skin wasn't real. Neither was the blood.

ANDREW               But... our trust. It doesn't mean anything, the fact that was real, that it would last, that was the whole point –

WOMAN                But we've made the calls now. We've told people.

ANDREW               You just happened to have a spare glove waiting?  
A sort of special prop just for the occasion.

WOMAN            If you remember, it was me that suggested it.  
Oldest trick in the book. Well not oldest, but you know,  
old.

Still got the hat?

*Pause.*

ANDREW          I knocked on the wall. It doesn't sound like a wall.

WOMAN          Where are you going with this? Are you going a bit mad  
Andrew, should we be calling a psychiatrist or  
something?

ANDREW          Do it. Yourself.

Knock on the wall.

MAN              No I'm not going to knock on the –

*The WOMAN knocks on the wall.*

WOMAN          Oh yeah.

He's right. It doesn't sound like a wall.

*She does it again.*

It's kind of more hollow, and more soft, at the same time.

*Long pause.*

*ANDREW tests the floor. Listens to it.*

MAN              Should we...?

WOMAN          Maybe.

*Beat.*

MAN              Sorry can I just ask while we've got a moment, am I good  
or bad cop then?

WOMAN          Bad.

MAN                    *Right.* Okay then. Bad... okay...

WOMAN                Andrew there is a reason the wall is how you described.

ANDREW               I thought so.

                          I'm not in a hotel, am I?

*Beat.*

MAN                    No.

ANDREW               None of this is a real hotel.

WOMAN                No.

ANDREW               Didn't think so.

*ANDREW picks up the chair and throws it at the wall.*

*It disappears through a previously unseen gap. Which has*  
*been there the whole time. An optical illusion.*

*The MAN lights a cigarette.*

MAN                    He's not stupid.

WOMAN                Well we know that. We do know that but I thought he  
might last a little bit longer.

ANDREW                You don't work for him.

                          Do you?

                          Either of you.

*Pause.*

WOMAN                No.

ANDREW                Who do you work for?

WOMAN                Well that's a really difficult question because the thing is  
that these days –

*She presses a button and one wall switches off.*

– these different groups whether they're government agencies or companies or terrorist organisations well they're all rather connected aren't they?

*She takes one corner of one of the walls and peels it away.*

Bearing in mind the way that governments need companies and companies need influence and influence comes through paying people of the kind that you might in an ideal world not want to be paying, and even if you can draw lines between all these different groups those lines don't hold do they?

*She presses another button and the ceiling lifts up.*

And the ideologies behind them are so indistinct and ever-changing, in fact I would go as far as to say that the only constant we can refer to is power.

*She starts folding up some of the various hotel props and furniture. Some of them she deflates.*

I would say I work for power, and I want that power for my own self-preservation and to get the things I want. Oh. Well that's a much clearer answer than I was expecting to give. There you go Andrew.

ANDREW      I thought you might be Russian?

WOMAN      Do I sound Russian?

ANDREW      It wouldn't make any difference if you did.

MAN      I'm not Russian either.

ANDREW      I want to speak to the ambassador.

MAN      The ambassador has washed his hands of you Andrew we discussed that right at the very beginning – with the

exception of a few journalists who have zero clout, you have no one. Everyone is backing away from you as fast as they can – well anyone who can help you. They're pleased, some of them, that you did what you did, but that is done and now you're old news.

ANDREW In that case.

WOMAN What did you want?

ANDREW What?

WOMAN What did you hope for, when you pressed the button and all that information trickled or flooded out of the Pentagon what did you hope would be the result?

ANDREW That people would know the truth.

WOMAN What truth? What people? The truth that they were being spied on. They don't care. They like it. It makes them feel safer. If it keeps the war out there and not in their homes they don't mind. They wilfully would rather not think about it. You mean people like you. Thinkers. Theorists. Warriors for the good and proper. There aren't very many of you.

ANDREW Courage is contagious.

*The WOMAN smiles, patronisingly.*

WOMAN Aw.

Not really.

Not when there's free wifi and Netflix.

*We're left in a large empty space.*

ANDREW There are people who want progress. Like you said –

WOMAN But the documents you leaked all the files I mean fine it revealed that the government was lying on a massive scale to the people and it made us think that possibly

everyone is lying all the time. But that's not the revelation is it? That's not the unexpected thing.

The unexpected aspect in all of this, and Facebook are surprised, the government is surprised, in fact everyone in power is surprised, is how much of this the people are prepared to take. All the information of where you go and who you are and what you do and who you love and what you eat and what you look like what you think what your body does or doesn't do, your experiences and photos and history and dreams are all given away in an instant as long as the product is supposedly free. Well no one saw that coming. The shoppers will take off their clothes and shred every last piece of their dignity if it means they can get something free. Who knew?

And in that context you releasing these files, is it any wonder the response is going to be a big shrug?

You think you're revealing how you can't trust anyone? We know. But we do it anyway. Why? It's easier.

MAN Suddenly you don't *own* your music, you have to hire it. Has anyone complained?

WOMAN That's *actually* the thing that bothers him most. Spotify. He's really shallow. You can't trust anyone Andrew that's absolutely right. And you can't trust anything. Any system of ownership or rights is totally contingent on forces that nobody understands, not really, so the whole world is just... tilting at the moment. Just rocking on the edge... And what you did?

ANDREW I tipped it over.

WOMAN No. You merely pointed at it.

*Pause.*

We've been having fun and games with you.

ANDREW           Why?

MAN               So you're just like everyone else.

ANDREW           What do you –

WOMAN            To get you to the point where you don't know which way's up.

*The whole room suddenly tilts ninety degrees.*

*ANDREW's gravity stays on his floor.*

*The MAN and the WOMAN walk round so their floor is the old wall.*

ANDREW           How are you doing this?

WOMAN            You want to know the mechanics?

MAN               He actually does.

WOMAN            It's all about perception. You want more detail?

                      I can tell you exactly if you like but it's really not the point.

*ANDREW sits down.*

*Long pause.*

ANDREW           Can I leave?

WOMAN            Andrew, I'm not sure you get this. Your passport has been revoked. You have no papers whatsoever.

                      Until you *join* something, sign up to *something*, it's not a question of can you leave, it's a question of that you don't exist.

*Pause.*

MAN               Do you want us to try and get you a Russian passport?

ANDREW           The Russians are more corrupt than us, if I was to become

a Russian citizen that would be –

MAN But you'll be able to stay here, under our protection.

ANDREW Under your control.

MAN Yes.

ANDREW But I don't know who you are.

WOMAN Anonymity is a luxury granted to those in power.

You don't know who anybody truly important is. And they will keep it like that.

MAN Look do you want a passport or not? We've got a deal?

*Long pause.*

ANDREW Okay. A Russian passport. Fine.

MAN *Alright.* Good. *No* thanks is there? No gratitude. You should come down from there by the way. The floor's over here.

*He goes.*

*Another long pause.*

*Everything's spinning.*

WOMAN You must feel better.

Now you've joined something.

*Pause.*

You know you were talking about war?

I've seen war.

And if I had to describe what it was like?

If I had to say what it actually feels like. Leaving aside the pain and the blood and the kind of *aesthetic* of it – I



mean if I tried to describe what it does to your mind and your experience...

*She gets a safety pin out. Undoes it.*

It's like this.

It feels exactly like what you're feeling now.

Utterly wild.

*She holds the needle out, then presses it against herself and this time...*

*...she pops, like a balloon.*

*ANDREW is left on stage alone.*

*Staring.*

*For slightly longer than we expect.*

*Then blackout.*

*End.*

## MIKE BARTLETT

Mike Bartlett's plays include *Game* (Almeida); *King Charles III* (Almeida/West End/Broadway); *An Intervention* (Paines Plough/Watford Palace Theatre); *Bull* (Sheffield Theatres/Off-Broadway); *Medea* (Glasgow Citizens/Headlong); *Chariots of Fire* (based on the film; Hampstead/West End); *13* (National Theatre); *Love, Love, Love* (Paines Plough/Plymouth Drum/Royal Court); *Earthquakes in London* (Headlong/National Theatre); *Cock* (Royal Court/Off-Broadway); *Artefacts* (Nabokov/Bush); *Contractions* and *My Child* (Royal Court).

He was Writer-in-Residence at the National Theatre in 2011, and the Pearson Playwright-in-Residence at the Royal Court Theatre in 2007. *Cock* won an Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre in 2010. *Love, Love, Love* won the TMA Best New Play Award in 2011. *Bull* won the same award in 2013. *King Charles III* won the Critics' Circle Award for Best New Play in 2015.

Directing credits include *Medea* (Glasgow Citizens/Headlong); *Honest* (Northampton Royal & Derngate) and *Class* (Tristan Bates).

He has written seven plays for BBC Radio, winning the Writers' Guild Tinniswood and Imison prizes for *Not Talking*. His three-part television series, *The Town*, was broadcast on ITV1 in 2012 and nominated for a BAFTA for Breakthrough Talent, and his five-part series *Doctor Foster* premiered on BBC1 in 2015 and won Best New Drama at the National Television Awards.

He is currently developing television projects with the BBC, ITV, Big Talk, and Drama Republic, and under commission from Headlong Theatre, Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse, and the Royal Court Theatre.

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